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James B. Finley Letters

8-25-1844

Letter from Robert P. Finley to James B. Finley

Robert P. Finley

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Uncle James

Wilmington Aug 25th 1844

Sir Having neglected to write to you until I find myself so heavily in debt I conclude to improve the suggestions of my conscience & wife & make one desperate effort and pay all off at once. You wrote from your District & also from New York both of which came to hand and each furnished a portion of pleasure but especially the intelligence from Conference was agreeable for at that time all was anxiety to get a feeler a head in reference to what would probably be done. I do not know that I ever felt so intently before. but I desist from further noticing the doings of that body for if I should begin I would only repeat what you meet in every man in the North (i.e. sensible ~~same~~ men I mean of course). I think the Conference did well did enough - and did it ~~right~~ right. The Question as I understand it now is whether slavery shall be recognized or not, it will not stop short of this. the adjustment & final determination of this question in the church will do much in determining for the whole country. all eyes are on you now more than at any former period in your history as a church. the doings of the Southern Methodist are read by all. every proposition for conciliation or compromise is looked at closely by men of every class and all wait to hear the north announce their readiness to meet the South on some grounds far below ~~that~~ ~~told~~ by you & others and so nobly defended on the conference floor. Shall it be said of those men who stood by old Methodism & did fight so valiantly for her principles that they have lacked to Southern dictation ~~no~~ never. never! I never read or heard you with more delight than your effort. ~~Our~~ Bishop Andrews case afforded me altho at first I did not like your substitute but after understanding its effects properly I gave my hearty assent & now think it was the best thing that could have been done in the case. but dear me how hard they take it

J. S. Brown is at Lincoln at present on a visit to our Mother. He is a Welshman. but takes me down time ago - he intended to quit the Conference. but afterwards our of those meetings lately and of persons better known - extra. but not early on the subject getting more new very intimate he is and I have to be very conscious in my approaches to him on

Rev James B. Smiley
Marietta

for Rev L. P. Allen

Mr Smiley

the subject I hope he will get his own act earnestly on the subject this is moral & very strong & done very religiously but not perform him religiously that he is a convert young man all agree

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I have had intimations that during your conference the subject will be likely to be discussed. Your friend Dr S. A. Latta is prepared to do fight. I reckon you have read his review. I have a bit of advice to give in reference to the Dr. that is that the Conference la cote him during this session nothing short of this will be right. Tell him by your acts if religion has not made him honest enough to relinquish his Claim on the Church for support - that it is your duty to see to those who have done efficient service to the Church till after this peroration of your superannuated list takes place I shall direct my small means to the Conference Committee for recurrent Claims. I consider the course of someone in the D. C. in reference to this matter dishonorable, dishonest & mean it is an affliction that one can not do something for

Quin La Can and other worthies in the Conference without such cases as you know the above and others to be ^{get a share} but enough I have warned - Bishop Laull too is to be at your conference to see to the interest of the South - I did hear too that Derbin would be there if so give him a chance to answer the Bishop & there will be nothing to fear! Was not that a complete thing of his at Conference

Poor old Schom he'd be there to tell how much he has done for emancipation & all this I am afraid he has not got on the strong side after all. They the people down this way drag him like a hot potato he had better take the hint give him & take an editorship South if I am not mistaken he will find it an uphill business here for a long time to come - One thing more you want only to be informed that Daup is recommended to Conference as an strenuous man

to be fully advised of your duty in his case you know him of old. & it is unnecessary for me to say his is unfit for such a work

I will conclude by referring you to David for particulars in reference to all the family friends you will learn from him of Matthews illness & Peats absence - Yours Respectfully R. P. Finley

Dear Uncle

I have so often menaced Mr Finley with writing myself to you, if he did not, that he has out of compliment reserved me a page on this sheet. He could have filled ^{it} much more to your satisfaction than I can. But obedience becomes a wife. It is my duty therefore to obey.

We should have been glad to have seen you during the past conference year. Among other reasons, you have travelled in the same, over a section of country in which I spent the first two years & a half of my residence in this State very pleasantly. Many agreeable friendships were contracted in that time, which further distance nor more reasonable engagements can obliterate so if I have the pleasure of meeting you again, you will be prepared to find me, very inquisitive in reference to the villages of Rushville & Somerset

Mr Finley proposes, if he can ascertain at what time you will be at home after Conference, to make you a visit. Should this project fail, hope you will feel inclined & also find it practicable, to bring aunt Hannah to Wilmington, before you return to your work again. We should be much gratified indeed, if you could do us the pleasure of a visit this fall. Think about it very deliberately, before you determine as the negative

Your affectionate niece
S. J. Finley.